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ABSTRACT

Enrollment management (EM) at Parkland College, in Illinois, is a comprehensive process designed to achieve and maintain optimum enrollment, focusing on recruitment, retention, and graduation rates. The primary goals of EM are to stabilize enrollment and finances, link academic programs and student services, improve services and access to information, reduce the college's vulnerability to demographic changes, and respond to economic forces. An ideal EM effort at the college would include strategies in the following areas: (1) recruitment, from identifying prospects to analyzing student variables and college characteristics affecting enrollment decisions; (2) marketing, taking into account student characteristics and District demographics; (3) retention, focusing on course, program, and individual student retention; (4) intervention, including diagnostic services for students and training for faculty and staff; and (5) information dissemination. In addition, the creation of an Enrollment Management Task Force appointed and chaired by a top-level administrator would ensure support from college administration. The Task Force would be charged with developing, evaluating, and implementing the college's Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. Finally, key factors that must be addressed in EM planning are leadership, strategic planning, comprehensiveness, key performance indicators, research, academic foundation, information technology, and evaluation. (Contains 12 references.) (KP)

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Parkland College

Enrollment Management Model

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Alan Seidman
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Why Enrollment Management?

Without a comprehensive strategy to manage enrollments, Parkland will find it difficult to increase productivity, service, quality, and competitiveness.

What Is Enrollment Management?

Enrollment management is a comprehensive process designed to help achieve and maintain optimum enrollment (recruitment, retention and graduation rates). It is an institution wide process that permeates virtually every aspect of the College's function and culture.

Enrollment Management's Primary Goals Include:

- Stabilizing enrollments (reverse declining enrollment, control growth and plan for fluctuations).
- Linking academic and student service programs.
- Stabilizing finances.
- Improving services (shorten response time to students, increase satisfaction and reduce paperwork).
- Improving access to information (putting our information systems to optimum usage).
- Reducing vulnerability to demographic changes.
- Responding to economic forces (expansion, recession, employment rates).
- Evaluating strategies (track what works and change what doesn't work).

Enrollment management begins with first student-client contact. It is a deliberate process that requires time for planning, full implementation and development of the information infrastructure that will sustain the efforts (some of the literature suggests up to three years from planning to implementation). It is based on a team effort which crosses

traditional college organizational lines. Enrollment management focuses on the longitudinal care and comprehensive education of students.

Parkland College Mission and Goals

Enrollment management must be linked to Parkland's mission and operational planning goals.

Parkland College Mission Statement:

> Parkland College is dedicated to providing for the comprehensive educational needs of its students with accessible and flexibly scheduled programs and services of high quality. In so doing, the College affords students the opportunity to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and guidance for personal development and societal benefit. Further, the College values and works toward the economic and cultural well-being of the residents of Illinois Community College District 505. The Board of Trustees and college personnel recognize the dignity and worth of each person, the differences and shared interests among individuals and groups, the contributions of diverse cultures, the value of creativity, and the need to rely on reason and cooperation to achieve our goals. These beliefs express a confidence in the College, a commitment to the communities served, and an optimism about the future of humankind.

Parkland College Operational Planning Goals:

- The College will foster a stronger and healthier learning community.
- The College will foster greater commitment to higher standards of quality in both education and administration.
- The College will so enhance its leadership role in post-secondary education and community services that it will become recognized increasingly as one of the premier community college's in the nation.
- The College will achieve and maintain financial vitality.

Linking Enrollment Management and the Academic Program

The quality of Parkland's academic program can only be developed and maintained in a stable enrollment environment. Parkland's products are our programs and services to District residents. Based on these programs and services, students will make the choice whether or not to attend the College, persist while attending, or drop out of Parkland. Academic policy guides a student's progress through our programs and must be aligned with both recruitment and retention strategies. Enrollment management recognizes that recruitment and retention are continuous processes.

Student Focused

Since students have the freedom to choose the college they wish to attend, enrollment management should establish early on a client relationship with Parkland students, parents and the community. A student's perspective and Parkland's District needs should always be kept in the forefront when developing and offering services, launching new programs and initiatives, and evaluating enrollment management plans. In addition to marketing college programs, enrollment management should be concerned with creating the best learning and teaching environment for students. Therefore, the College needs to balance such factors as academic program development, faculty development, academic policy formulation, recruitment policies and procedures, student life programs, as well as retention policies and procedures.

Optimum Enrollment

Optimum enrollment can be defined as the figure that indicates revenues and expenditures are in balance. It is a number that falls between the maximum and minimum fiscal and physical capacity of the institution. It is a multidimensional concept and can include:

- Optimum headcount. The institution's physical capacity. This would include full capacity of all classrooms and laboratories.
- Optimum full-time enrollment. This includes faculty-student ratios and class size.
- Optimum segmentation. This includes enrollments in specific departments.

Optimum enrollment is an ever changing number since capital improvements and implementation of different instructional delivery alternatives (i.e. distance learning) will affect enrollment. It has been suggested that enrollment goals can be calculated by taking the difference between the current enrollment and the optimum benchmark enrollment set by the institution.

Optimum Enrollment - Current Enrollment = Enrollment Management Goal

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are numerical indices Parkland can use to measure the success of its strategies and tactics or to judge itself with respect to past performances. KPI's should be developed, clearly articulated and agreed upon by all those involved in the enrollment management plan. Examples of KPI's could include:

Recruitment KPI's	Retention KPI's	Operational KPI's
# of Prospects	# of Cohort Freshman	Dollar Revenue
# of Inquiries /Responses	# of Drop-outs	Dollar Expenditures
# of Applications	# on Probation	FTE Enrollment
# of Freshman Enrollees	# of persisters	Headcount

Parkland Enrollment Management Strategies

Parkland enrollment management strategies would include recruitment strategies, marketing strategies, retention strategies, intervention strategies, and information strategies.

Recruitment Strategies

Recruitment can be defined as the process Parkland will undertake to favorably influence a prospective student's decision to attend the College. The recruitment phase begins with identifying prospects. Prospects are students who are eligible to attend Parkland. Recruitment ends and retention begins once the student enrolls.

Two primary sets of variables will influence the student's decision to enroll at the College.

- Student variables include: ability and interest; socioeconomic background; the influence of significant others; aspirations and goals; and expectations of the college.
- College characteristics include: academic programs; cost; location; and reputation or quality.

The decision to enroll at a particular college results from a student's analysis of these variables and the perceived congruence between the student needs and priorities and

College characteristics. The student centered variables can become the prospect search criteria while the college centered variables become the focus of institutional development.

One way of increasing enrollments is to increase the number of prospects. Prospects who usually come through referrals of others have a much higher yield rate than those that come from other types of referrals, such as mailing lists. Building an active referral network requires an information system able to record and track students.

Ways to increase referrals can include targeted high school guidance counselors and faculty, alumni and other significant groups, churches or community organizations. Public relations which provide a positive image of Parkland in the community can also increase referrals.

Prospects and Yield

Prospects are the number of potential students in the marketplace. The yield rate is the percentage of those prospects who decide to attend the College at each stage of their enrollment decision process. The prospect yield funnel in Figure 1 illustrates this process. It is a two phase process, which includes recruitment and retention. Yield has significant fiscal implications for the College. The more prospects that turn into applicants, complete their programs, the more even the revenue stream.

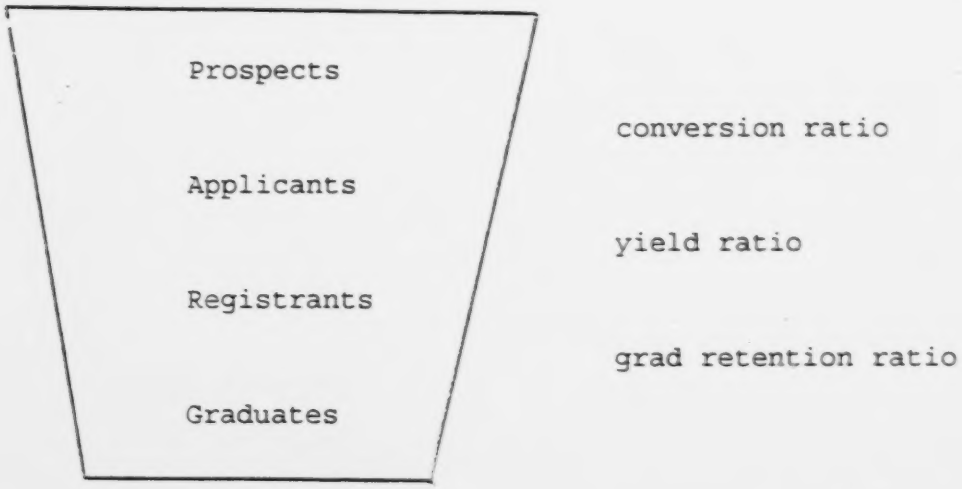
Marketing Strategies

Marketing is the process of putting the right product before

the right audience at the right price (the four P's; place, product, price, promotion). In education, the product is the curriculum, academic programs and services. When a product

Figure 1

Enrollment Management Prospect Yield Funnel



appeals to a well-defined segment of the prospect base that segment is called a "niche." Current niches in Parkland's prospect base are: specific program offerings (nursing, health careers), industry training (business training institute), special populations (women returning to the work force, minorities), career changes, and the reputation of the faculty and the College. In addition, the development of Parkland as a premier college offering microcomputer training and distance education are emerging niches.

Finding prospect groupings with common interests and

characteristics is called "market segmentation." Identifying market segments and describing their characteristics is a function of market research. Market research can identify the types of students that are attending particular parts of Parkland, such as those enrolled in nursing and attending during the evening or at off campus sites.

Market research can also help Parkland uncover new opportunities. It can also help identify other market niches and populations and could provide insights into price sensitivity (for specialized training programs). Market research is an integral part of enrollment management. Not only must it contain a solid institutional research component but needs to be extended beyond a description of student characteristics. Market research needs to be sensitive to our District demographics, including lifestyles, purchasing power, buying behavior, etc. Marketing strategies are also an integral part to retention. Students recruited by the College are those that should also be retained.

Retention Strategies

Parkland College is using three definitions to define retention; course, program and student retention. Generally, within these definitions, retention can be defined as a student's satisfactory progress toward his/her educational objectives. Within this context, students who are recruited and enrolled at Parkland should reasonably expect that the programs, policies, procedures and interventions necessary for them to successfully complete their programs are in place. Recruitment and retention

are inexorably linked. It is essential from the enrollment management perspective that recruitment and retention be coordinated. In order to coordinate recruitment and retention, the College must focus on both student and institutional enrollment decisions and the factors that influence them.

These factors fall into three broad categories:

- Academic.
- Administrative service.
- Student Life.

Academic factors can be divided into subcategories to include:

- Academic climate (teacher learning process and faculty student interaction).
- Curriculum and programs.
- Academic policy.

Administrative service factors can include:

- Service climate (treatment of students).
- Support systems.
- Administrative policy.

Student Life factors can include:

- Peer relationships.
- Participation in college activities.
- Student development including career planning and course placement.

It is vitally important to Parkland that meaningful research focus on the factors which influence student decisions, to ascertain which ones have a positive influence on student

retention behavior. In addition, a key to helping to retain students is the ability of Parkland to identify "at-risk" students early enough to permit intervention strategies to work.

Intervention Strategies

Poor academic preparation, poor study skills, poor self esteem or personal conflict can contribute to academic underachievement. Each requires different intervention strategies. Intervention systems should have diagnostic capability to refer students to the treatment or counseling most appropriate for them to succeed. Parkland should use intrusive intervention with students identified as having special needs. Intrusive intervention would take the form of advising and counseling and would involve prescriptive academic skills and/or tutoring programs. Freshman orientation and Parkland's ORN 101 can be very effective in helping a student achieve his or her goal.

In addition, intervention strategies should also focus on faculty and staff. Cross- cultural sensitivity, diversity of learning styles, and effective teaching and learning environments, are all effective retention initiatives currently being undertaken at Parkland.

Research shows that most students leave college the first year so it is important to "front-load" retention and intervention strategies. The key elements in intervention strategies is knowing when and with whom to intervene.

Information Strategies

A campus wide information strategy must tie individual systems and data together into a seamless management information system. Data should be captured once at its source and be available to those in need of the data to make decisions. There should be one data dictionary for the College, with each data element having only one definition. Technology should be used to provide service directly to students, faculty and staff. Various technological systems can help Parkland improve services, including:

- Touchtone registration. (in progress)
- Electronic mail. (in place)
- Voice mail. (in place)
- Voice information systems. (in place)
- Computerized ID cards. (in progress)
- On-line advising. (in process)
- In-house publishing on demand.
- Academic and student electronic bulletin boards.
- Interactive classrooms. (in place)
- Information kiosks.

Integration across all data systems is a must to link information, course planning and scheduling, faculty planning and management and student financial aid. Data should flow barrier-free, in a useable format, to authorized users.

Reengineering

Reengineering is the process of redesigning major processes

around information systems. Reengineering is defined as using a modern information system to redesign administrative processes to dramatically increase productivity and performance.

Reengineering must be done with a client driven mentality that puts service first.

Ideal areas for reengineering at Parkland could include:

- Developing paperless grading.
- Bringing on-line advising to faculty offices.
- Touchtone registration. (in progress)
- Computerized ID and library check out system.
- Optical imaging.

Reengineering requires partnerships between campus technologists and campus clients focusing on the future. It requires a focus on technology at all levels of the College.

Enrollment Management Implementation at Parkland

Parkland College Enrollment Management Task Force (EMTF)

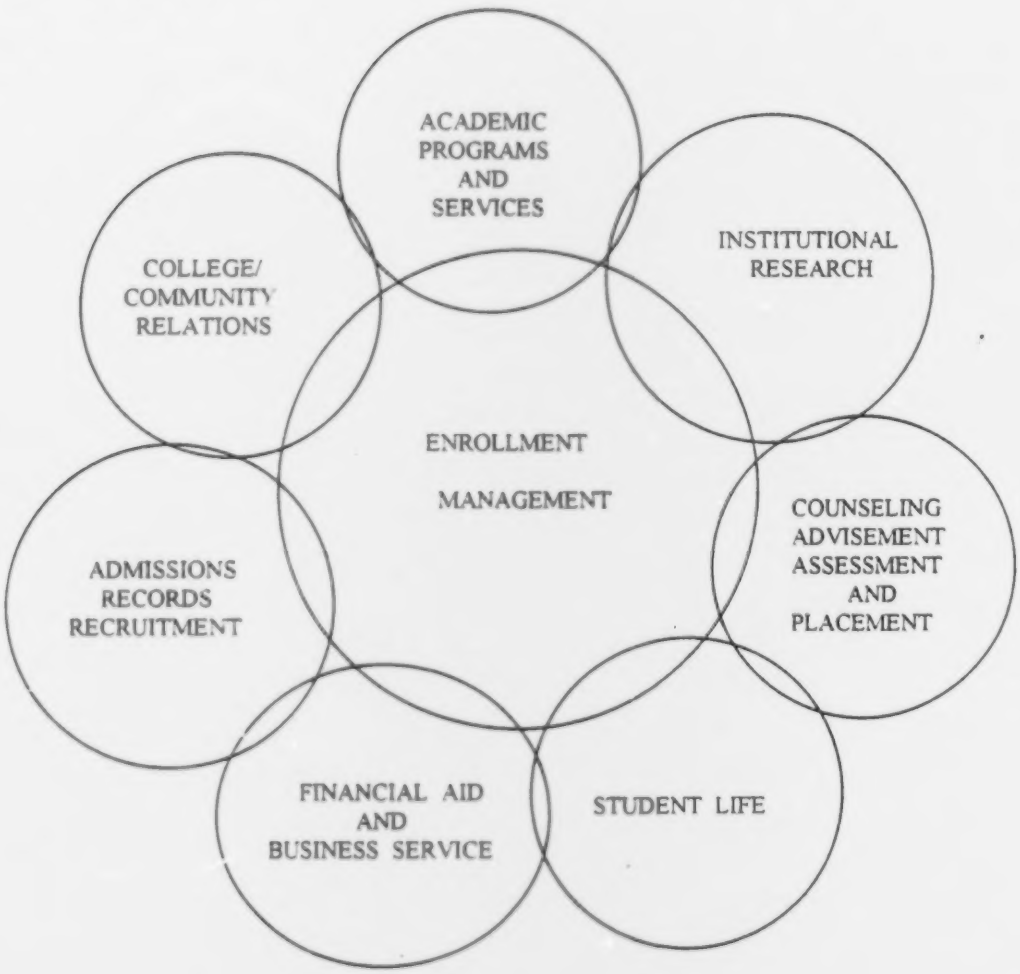
Enrollment management requires the interaction and cooperation between different offices and services of the College. How will the system be organized?

An effective enrollment management plan can only succeed with support from top-level administration. In addition, an Enrollment Management Task Force (EMTF) is a good fit with our Quality Implementation and Environmental Scanning Committees.

An EMTF should be appointed and chaired by a top-level administrator. Figure 2 illustrates the suggested Parkland College EMTF model.

Figure 2

Parkland College Enrollment Management Task Force (EMTF)



EMTF subcommittees would include:

- Counseling, Advising, Assessment and Placement
- Student Life
- Financial Aid and Business Services
- Admissions, Records and Recruitment
- College and Community Relations
- Academic Programs and Services
- Institutional Research

Subcommittee chairs would form the EMTF and be charged with developing, evaluating and implementing the Parkland College Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. The EMTF would develop enrollment management goals and objectives as they pertain to the College mission statement and operational planning goals. The EMTF through the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan gives some sense of how Parkland expects to reach these goals in an integrated and student centered way.

To ensure continuity an outline should be used to gather pertinent information by each subcommittee. The outline could include such areas as:

- Mission of service area
- Staff perception of mission of service area
- Review of available literature and research of service area
- Service area wish lists (services needed but not provided)
- Analysis and recommendations (matching goals with results)

Each subcommittee chair would reach out across traditional college lines to develop college wide committees to serve their

function and needs. An example of the form and function of a subcommittee would be:

Admissions, Records & Recruitment Subcommittee

The subcommittee would be chaired by the Director of Admissions, Records and Recruitment. Incidently, this subcommittee may be broken into additional subcommittees, for example: one for admissions, one for records and one for recruitment. The charge for the recruitment subcommittee could be:

Recruitment Subcommittee

Review Recruiters Role and Responsibilities. Continued delineation of specific program responsibilities for each recruiter, i.e., on-campus programs, off-campus programs, publications, special programs and services.

Recruiter Recruitment Activities

- Develop a plan to reach out to each assigned program area using updated marketing plan as a guide.
- Develop a monthly plan for each assigned program area using the peer review process as initial evaluation.
- Develop outcome measures for each activity either anecdotal or qualitative.

Internal Recruiter

Examine the feasibility of one existing recruiter to be assigned to work with currently enrolled students. If deemed feasible the internal recruiter's responsibility:

- contact students close to graduation and encourage them to earn a degree
- contact certificate students and encourage them to earn an associate's degree

- work with departments to plan retention activities

Prospect System Development

Develop automated prospect system to track prospects and to personalize correspondence to maximize student conversion rate from prospect to applicant. Develop an inquiry card that is given out at every opportunity to anyone interested in Parkland. Faculty, staff and administrators will be encouraged to carry inquiry cards to distribute when appropriate.

Student Decision Calendar

Develop a calendar of events that will maximize student communication and encourage enrollment.

Special programs

Special programs to supplement recruitment activities (this list will grow with input from the whole college community):

- Parents' Night
- Invite high school students to participate in Parkland College's Spring College Day
- Guidance newsletter - quarterly
- Lincoln's Challenge liaison
- Unit 4 Alternative School liaison
- Special programs for eighth grade students i.e. the importance of college
- Special workshops for high school student at Parkland and/or at the high school
- Invite groups on campus as often as possible
- Pursue students who are spouses or family of U of I students, faculty and staff
- Help recruit international students

·Family and friends of currently enrolled students

Another example of a subcommittee is the College and Community Relations Subcommittee.

College and Community Relations Subcommittee

The subcommittee would be chaired by the Director of College and Community Relations (Jan Simon). It would be her responsibility to recruit members of the College community to serve on the subcommittee. Specific charge to the subcommittee could be:

·To develop a yearly Parkland College Marketing Plan. The outline of the Plan, with goals, objectives, yearly theme with performance measures submitted to the EMTF for approval by June 1 for September 1 implementation.

Other areas that this subcommittee (or another subcommittee) may review: print and other media plan; publication plan; internal and external communications, etc.

These are just two examples of the seven subcommittees of the EMTF and the types of activities each subcommittee would work on to help insure the optimum enrollment for Parkland. Subcommittees would submit their plans to the EMTF for review. Once approved by the EMTF the subcommittee plan is reviewed by appropriate College constituent groups. Once adapted the subcommittee would be charged with implementing the plan and it would become a part of the Parkland College Enrollment Management Plan.

Conclusion

These are the key factors that Parkland must address while we are discussing and developing an enrollment management plan.

Leadership

For enrollment management to be successful, there must be a commitment to developing, implementing and evaluating enrollment management strategies. The implementation of a successful enrollment management program requires cooperation, coordination and teamwork among various campus constituencies.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning decisions must be made in the context of Parkland as a whole and include those who will be asked to implement strategic planning goals and objectives.

Comprehensiveness

Enrollment management is not a process conducted by only one person or unit of the College. It is a process that involves the entire Parkland College community. It is the integration of diverse functions, the coordinated planning of units, and the articulation and implementation of strategies.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Enrollment management is performance based. KPI's are important to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of enrollment management plans providing college-wide benchmarks.

Research

Enrollment management relies on research. Research should provide strategic information on District demographics, trends and student behavior. Does the College sufficiently target market its recruitment activities? Do academic programs attract students? Does advising and counseling, orientation and student

life programs help students adjust to the College? Course information, demand analysis, closed section tracking etc. are also data that are needed.

Academic Foundation

The academic program forms the heart of Parkland College. The academic program must form a part of the College's recruitment, retention and service strategies.

Information Technology

Enrollment management strategies and tactics cannot be developed or implemented without a state of the art information system.

Evaluation

Process and program evaluation are essential to the enrollment management process. Evaluations can take the form of surveys, program reviews, focus groups on service effectiveness, or surveys of student needs and priorities. Evaluation can be either quantitative and/or qualitative.

Remarks

Enrollment Management is a powerful concept which will take time, effort and a College wide commitment to implement. Comprehensive campus cooperation is the heart of enrollment management. It is the integration of many office functions, practices and procedures that is the challenge to make enrollment management work. Enrollment management will optimize our enrollments, services and resources to our constituents. It will make Parkland a premier institution that puts students first.

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